

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1029

By Newton

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A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Ira Cox for his fifty years of public service as a first responder.

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived and built by individuals who were willing to sacrifice their personal concerns to ensure the public safety and welfare, and the Volunteer State is especially proud to be the home of so many valiant men and women who have performed above and beyond the call of duty; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Tennesseans have continued this time-honored tradition of service as first responders, dedicating their time and efforts to aiding their fellow citizens in emergency situations; and

WHEREAS, Ira Cox is one such heroic Tennessean who recently celebrated fifty years as a first responder in Tennessee, making him possibly the longest serving first responder in history; and

WHEREAS, he began his exemplary service on March 18, 1954, when he became an official member of the Lee Atchley Memorial Rescue Squad at age fifteen; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cox began driving an ambulance at age sixteen and has seen many changes during his five decades of service to Cleveland and Bradley County; and

WHEREAS, when he began, the squad, which is now one of the finest in the country, used a small, handmade, two-wheel trailer to haul the hacksaws, hammers, pry bars, and ropes that were used in emergency situations; since then, the squad has upgraded to such technology as "The Jaws of Life," allowing them to slash their extrication times from two to three hours to a matter of minutes; and

WHEREAS, through the years, Mr. Cox has served in a wide range of positions, earning tremendous respect and admiration for the quality of his work and the strength of his character; he has been a full-time fireman with the Cleveland Fire Department, a Reserve Officer with the



Bradley County Sheriff's Office, volunteer fireman for the city, Acting Chief of Rescue, and Assistant Chief, and he holds the title of Site Safety Officer and Lieutenant for the Bradley County Rescue Service and Constable for the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, knowing the grave importance of his position, he has always sought to be fully prepared for any contingency, and he completed 174 free-fall jumps to gain experience in Aircraft Crash Rescue and Response; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Cox has no plans to retire and hopes to continue to serve for many more years in his beloved field of public service, in which he is joined by his wife ,Virginia, grandson Dale Murray, and stepson Mike Patterson, fellow members of the Bradley County Rescue Service; and

WHEREAS, throughout his estimable career, Ira Cox has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, earning a wonderful reputation among in his community; and

WHEREAS, Education Director Chip Bryant of the Bradley County Sheriff's Office stated, "There is no way to know how many lives Ira Cox has saved, either directly or indirectly. Ira has been my friend and mentor since I was in the first grade. He more than deserves all the honors our community can give him;" and

WHEREAS, Sheriff Dan Gilley added, "Ira has made an incredible contribution to the community through his countless hours of training and first response," and BCRS Chief Dewey Woody commented, "Ira has been an anchor for the service. He has always offered great wisdom and support for the cause;" and

WHEREAS, Ira Cox exemplifies the spirit of service and allegiance to family and community that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Ira Cox for his many years of service to the people of Cleveland and Bradley County, thank him for his bravery and dedication to the public welfare, and wish him the best in his every future endeavor.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.